

## Case 3176

***Ptinus tectus* Boieldieu, 1856 (Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed conservation of usage of the specific name**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this application is to conserve the long and universal usage of the name *Ptinus tectus* Boieldieu, 1856 for a well-known spider beetle (family ANOBIIDAE, subfamily PTININAE) of significant economic importance. Boieldieu proposed the name as a replacement for the junior primary homonym *Ptinus pilosus* White, 1846 (a dorcatomine anobiid from New Zealand) with which he had misidentified his new taxon, but it is proposed that, in accord with both taxonomic reality and usage, *P. tectus* should be deemed to be the name of a then new nominal species.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Coleoptera; ANOBIIDAE; PTININAE; DORCATOMINAE; *Ptinus tectus*; spider beetles.

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1. The nominal species *Ptinus pilosus* White, 1846 (p. 8) was described from material collected in New Zealand. The name is an invalid junior primary homonym of *Ptinus pilosus* Müller, 1821. Hinton (1941, p. 358) pointed out that White's species belongs to the subfamily DORCATOMINAE, not the PTININAE. The combination *Dorcatoma pilosa* (White, 1846) has been used recently by Kuschel (1990, p. 54), who was apparently unaware that the specific name was a junior primary homonym and therefore invalid.

2. Boieldieu (1856, p. 652) described a species from Van Diemen's Land under the heading '*Pt[inus] tectus*, Mihi'. The species which he actually described is a well-known spider beetle of significant economic importance which has become universally known by that name. Recent major works which have used the name *Ptinus tectus* Boieldieu include Lawrence (1991), Lawrence & Britton (1994), and Lawrence et al. (2000). Lawrence (1991, p. 444) stated 'the best known ptinids are those which have become pests of stored products and have been spread worldwide by human transport. Examples are . . . and *P[tinus] tectus* Boieldieu'. Other authors who have recently used the name include Archibald & Chalmers (1983), Waller (1984), Booth, Cox & Madge (1990), Vavra (1993), Borowski (1996), Klimaszewski & Watt (1997) and Phillips (2000); a list of further references is held by the Commission Secretariat. When he established *Ptinus tectus*, Boieldieu (1856, p. 652) listed *Ptinus pilosus* White, 1846 as a synonym and stated 'J'ai été obligé de changer le nom de cette espèce, car celui qui lui a été donné d'abord appartenait déjà à une espèce décrite par Müller'. It is evident that Boieldieu proposed his name *Ptinus tectus* expressly as a replacement (a nomen novum) for *P. pilosus* White, 1846, wrongly believing that White's species was the same as the one described by himself.

This means that the name *Ptinus tectus* Boieldieu, 1856 formally applies to White's dorcatomine species (Article 72.7 of the Code), and not to the taxon for which it has always been used.

3. Hinton (1941, p. 358) pointed out the problem, and attempted to solve it by claiming that Boieldieu (1856) had effectively proposed two homonymous names, one of them, *Ptinus tectus* (a), for the new species that Boieldieu was dealing with (i.e. the well-known ptinine), the other, *Ptinus tectus* (b), a replacement for *Ptinus pilosus* White, 1846. He then claimed that *Ptinus tectus* Boieldieu (a) had place priority, and was therefore the valid name for the ptinine. He stated (p. 359) that 'therefore *P. tectus* (b), over which *P. tectus* (a) has place priority, must be renamed again. I herewith propose the name *Dorcatoma pilosellus*, nom. nov. = *Ptinus pilosellus*'. He evidently intended *D. pilosellus* (recte *pilosella*) to be a replacement name for *Ptinus pilosus* White, 1846, nec Müller, 1821. However, Hinton's proposed solution is not in accordance with the Code. Furthermore, *D. pilosella* Hinton, 1941 is itself a junior primary homonym (of *Dorcatoma pilosella* Reitter, 1901), and, following the subjective synonymy set out in Hudson (1934, p. 198, footnote), the valid name for the dorcatomine species is *oblonga* Broun, 1880, as published in the binomen *Dorcatoma oblonga*.

4. In order to conserve the long and universal usage of *Ptinus tectus* Boieldieu, 1856, I propose that it be treated as the name of a then new nominal taxon and not as a replacement name for the dorcatomine species *P. pilosus* White, 1846.

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to rule that *tectus* Boieldieu, 1856, as published in the binomen *Ptinus tectus*, is to be treated as the specific name of a then new nominal species;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *tectus* Boieldieu, 1856, as published in the binomen *Ptinus tectus* and as ruled in (1) above to be treated as the name of a then new nominal species.

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